

Simple Google Search Tricks

For the High School Student

1. Use the “site:” operator to limit searches to a particular site.

This feature can be handy because many site’s built-in search tools don’t return the results you’re looking for, and some sites don’t even have a search feature. For example, if you are looking for works of art by Vincent Van Gogh, you could try this search: Van Gogh site:metmuseum.org.

2. Use the OR operator.

This can be useful if you’re looking at researching a topic but you’re not sure which keywords will return the information you need. It can be particularly handy in conjunction with the “site:” operator. For example, you could try this search: GTD OR “getting things done” site:webworkerdaily.com

3. Exclude specific terms with the – operator.

You can narrow your searches using this operator. For example, if you’re looking for information about American Idol but don’t want anything about Simon Cowell, you could try: “American idol” –cowell

4. Search for specific document types.

Google can search the web for specific types of files using the “filetype:” operator. If you’re looking for PowerPoint files about World War II, for example, you could try: WWII filetype:ppt

5. Search within numerical ranges using the .. operator.

Say, for example, you want to look for information about Olympic events that took place in the 1950’s, you could use this search: Olympics 1950..1960

6. Find related terms and documents

This is one of the lesser-used tricks in the book, but could be one of the most useful. Adding a tilde (~) to a search term will return related terms. For example, ~nutrition returns results with the words nutrition, food, and health in them.

7. Find related websites

These are useful when you are you looking for information on one site, but need to find more information for a paper or project you can use the related: operator. For example, if you are doing a project on health care and have been researching the healthfinder.gov website, you can try related:www.healthfinder.gov to find other websites related to the Healthfinder website.

8. Find news articles from sources located in the specified location or source

Suppose you are researching a specific event and want to narrow down the types of newspaper articles that would pop up by focusing on the location by using the location: operator. If you are writing about earthquakes and want to limit your results to earthquakes within the United States, for example, try using earthquake location:usa

You can also use the source: operator to find news from a specific source. For example, to show articles on immigration from the Los Angeles Times, type immigration source:los_angeles_times (When searching news articles, this operator works best when you use the Google News search engine.)

Restrict Search to Sites where Query Words Appear

Operators	Meaning	Type Into Search Box (& Results)
allintext:	All query words must appear in the text of the page.	allintext:battle of the bulge (Search for Battle of the Bulge during WWII.)
intext:	The terms must appear in the text of the page.	Mark Twain intext:huckleberry finn (Find pages mentioning Mark Twain where his book, Huckleberry Finn, is included in the text of the page)
allintitle:	All query words must appear in the title of the page.	allintitle: Ancient Civilizations China (Search for pages with titles containing "Ancient," "Civilizations," and "China".)
intitle:	The terms must appear in the title of the page.	world war II movies intitle:top ten (Search for pages with the words World War II and movies that include top ten in the title of the page.)